

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AF-10 ARA-16 EUR-25 NEA-10 AID-20 IO-14 DPW-01

DRC-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /186 W
----- 096232

P R 141212Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2682

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

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AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSYLIMA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SANSALVADOR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
USDEL JEC PARIS
USINT ALGIERS
USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO
AMCONSUL DAN NANG
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

UNCLAS SAIGON 3401

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJECT: COMMUNIST ATROCITY AT CAI LAY SCHOOL

REF: SAIGON 3276 (NOTAL)

1. ADDRESSEES MAY FIND THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF MASSACRE
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BY VC OF 32 SCHOOLCHILDREN IN CAI LAY DISTRICT USEFUL IN ANY
FUTURE DISCUSSIONS OF THE "PRG" ISSUE.

2. A RECENT ATROCITY VIVIDLY DEMONSTRATES THE DRV/"PRG"
BLATANT DISREGARD OF THE CEASE-FIRE IN THEIR CONTINUING CAMPAIGN
TO TERRORIZE THE CIVILIAN POPULATION OF SOUTH VIET-NAM. WITH
THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF THEIR EXPECTATIONS OF INCREASING THEIR
INFLUENCE AND SUPPORT AMONG THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE POPULATION

DURING THE PERIOD SUBSEQUENT TO THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT, THE DRV/"PRG" INTENSIFIED THEIR TRADITIONAL PRACTICE OF TERRORISM BY WHOLESALE MURDER.

3. ON MARCH 9, A MORTAR ROUND WAS FIRED INTO THE GROUNDS OF AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN CAI LAY DISTRICT TOWN, DINH TUONG PROVINCE; SOME FORTY MILES SOUTHWEST OF SAIGON. THE ROUND LANDED AT 2:55 P.M. WHEN THE SCHOOLYARD WAS FILLED WITH CHILDREN WAITING TO FILE INTO THEIR CLASSROOMS FOR THE AFTERNOON SESSION. AT THE LATEST COUNT, 32 STUDENTS WERE KILLED AND 34 WOUNDED, THREE OF WHOM HAVE BEEN EVACUATED TO SAIGON IN CRITICAL CONDITION. ONE TEACHER AND TWO LOCAL ADULTS WERE ALSO WOUNDED. IN RESPONSE TO A GVN COMPLAINT, IRANIAN AND INDONESIAN REPRESENTATIVES FROM ICCS REGION VI IN MY THO PAID AND OBSERVATION VISIT TO THE SITE, UNACCOMPANIED BY POLISH AND HUNGARIAN COLLEAGUES WHO AGAIN USED THE PRETEXT OF A LACK OF PRG SECURITY GUARANTEES AND LIAISON OFFICERS TO EVADE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES. THE ICCS HAS A FRAGMENT OF THE TAIL FIN, WHICH IS UNQUESTIONABLY FROM AN 82 MM MORTAR ROUND OF COMMUNIST MANUFACTURE. THE IRANIANS AND INDONESIANS ARE PREPARING AN "OBSERVATION REPORT" AND WILL RETURN TO CAI LAY ON MARCH 15 TO INTERVIEW WITNESSES.

4. A KEY ELEMENT IN THE SCURRILOUS COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE GVN IS THE SHRILL ALLEGATIONS OF GVN ATTACKS ON CIVILIAN TARGETS --PARTICULARLY SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, AND PAGODAS-- WHICH, THOUGH UNSUBSTANTIATED BY EVIDENCE OR DISINTERESTED WITNESSES, NEVER SEEMS TO LACK A CREDULOUS AUDIENCE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES READY TO ACCEPT FABRICATION AS FACT. YET IT IS THE GVN-- WHICH BEARS THE BURDEN OF TRYING TO PROTECT ALL BUT A TINY FRACTION OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE POPULATION FROM COMMUNIST TERRORIST ATTACKS--THAT PROPOSED TWO MONTHS AGO A CESSATION OF THOSE FORMS OF MILITARY AND PARAMILITARY ACTIVITY WHICH HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST CASUALTIES AMONG NONCOMBATANTS.

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5. ON JANUARY 15, BRIGADIER GENERAL HIEP PROPOSED IN THE TWO PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION THE ISSUANCE OF A JOINT APPEAL FOR AN END ON JANUARY 18 TO: ALL INDIRECT FIRE; THE LAYING OF MINES AND BOOBY TRAPS IN CULTIVATED AREAS, ROADS, AND WATERWAYS; ATTACKS WITH EXPLOSIVES IN DENSELY POPULATED AREAS AND PUBLIC GATHERING PLACES; AND AN END TO ABDUCTIONS, ASSASSINATIONS, AND OTHER ACTS OF REPRISAL AND TERRORISM AGAINST INNOCENT PERSONS, HIEP PRESENTED HIS PROPOSAL AS A CONCRETE FIRST STEP WHICH HE HOPED WOULD LEAD TO AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE ATMOSPHERE FOR DISCUSSION OF OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CEASE-FIRE, BUT STRESSED THAT IT WOULD BRING AN IMMEDIATE ALLEVIATION OF THE SUFFERING OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION.

6. "PRG" COLONEL GIANG'S REPLY TO HIEP'S PROPOSAL WAS: "IF YOU ARE WISE, YOU HAD BETTER NOT PROPOSE ANYTHING BECAUSE WE WILL

NEVER ACCEPT ANY OF YOUR PROPOSALS." THE COMMUNISTS IMMEDIATELY REJECTED THIS HUMANITARIAN GVN INITIATIVE AS A "DIRTY TRICK," AND SUBSEQUENTLY STEPPED UP THEIR ATTACKS AGAINST CIVILIAN TARGETS. AS A PART OF THEIR EFFORT TO LOWER THE PROFILE OF VIOLENCE AND DECEIVE THE OUTSIDE WORLD INTO BELIEVING THAT THEY ARE NO LONGER PURSUING A VIOLENT MILITARY STRUGGLE TO DESTROY AN INDEPENDENT SOUTH VIET-NAM THEY HAVE RECENTLY REDUCED COMMITMENT OF THEIR FORCES TO LARGE GROUND ATTACKS AGAINST RVNAF UNITS WHILE DOUBLING THEIR USE OF INDIRECT FIRE WEAPONS AND INTENSIFYING THEIR TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE POPULATION AT LARGE. THE ATROCITY CITED ABOVE IS ONLY ONE OF THE MOST EGREGIOUS EXAMPLES OF RECENT COMMUNIST ACTIONS THAT INCLUDE THE BURNING OF REFUGEE HAMLETS, GRENADINGS OF PUBLIC ESTABLISHMENTS AND PAGODAS, THE ABDUCTION FOR FORCED LABOR OF AN ENTIRE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY, AND THE ABDUCTION AND ASSASSINATION OF TRAVELLERS BY NVA/VC DISGUISED IN GVN UNIFORMS.

7. THESE MURDEROUS ATTACKS AGAINST EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS TARGETS AND OTHER SIMILAR DEPREDATIONS AGAINST UNARMED AND UNSUSPECTING NONCOMBATANTS REVEAL THE HYPOCRISY BEHIND THE RECENT "PRG" ACCESSION TO THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS. WHILE CLAIMING DEEP INTEREST IN HUMANITARIAN CAUSES, THE "PRG" IN ITS NOTE OF ACCESSION REGISTERED A RESERVATION TO THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS WHICH WOULD EXTEND THE PROTECTION OF THE CONVENTIONS TO THE TYPES OF IRREGULAR FORCES WHICH WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ATROCITY AT CAI LAY SCHOOL.

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